

help clarify issues for me, and he was a true trailblazer who educated our community about the importance of black political power. I will always remember his wise counsel and his friendship.

Though Carter Gilmore died in 2006, his trailblazing legacy as the City of Oakland's first African American elected to the City Council continues to inspire younger generations to aspire for heights that they may not have ever considered without his example.

Today, the Oakland African American Museum and Library is unveiling an exhibit dedicated to Carter Gilmore's life and legacy. Therefore, on behalf of California's 13th Congressional District, I join the family and friends of Carter Gilmore in celebrating his life of public service. I offer my sincerest gratitude to him for all that he did to pave the way for future generations of community-oriented leaders.

HONORING MELODY
WATTENBARGER

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Melody Wattenbarger, the CEO and President of Roadrunner Food Bank of New Mexico. Ms. Wattenbarger has worked tirelessly to fight hunger for over 30 years.

As CEO and President of Roadrunner Food Bank, Melody created innovative approaches to aid families facing hunger across New Mexico. Her leadership enabled the food bank to assist 70,000 people each week. She created and strengthened key partnerships across communities, including partnerships with schools, doctors, private industry leaders, senior centers, and food pantries. Melody was the founding President of the board for the New Mexico Association of Food Banks from 1999 to 2004 and continues to hold a seat on the board.

Melody Wattenbarger's leadership in hunger relief has not only helped New Mexicans; she was the founding executive director of the High Plains Food Bank in Amarillo, Texas, she worked for the National Food Bank Network (Feeding America), and she regularly served on a variety of Feeding America committees. Melody was named the 2017 John van Hengel Fellow by Feeding America. The award "recognizes the recipient for their leadership, local impact, national influence, commitment, and entrepreneurial spirit in the area of hunger relief."

I am proud to honor Ms. Melody Wattenbarger for her leadership in the fight against hunger. Her efforts are inspirational to the entire community in New Mexico. I am confident that even in retirement she will remain an advocate for families experiencing hunger and her community will be better for her involvement.

CONDEMNING ETHNIC CLEANSING
OF ROHINGYA AND CALLING FOR
AN END TO ATTACKS IN AND AN
IMMEDIATE RESTORATION OF
HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO
RAKHINE, BURMA

SPEECH OF

HON. BRENDA L. LAWRENCE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 90, which condemns ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and calls for an end to the attacks, and an immediate restoration of humanitarian access to the state of Rakhine in Burma.

Many consider the Rohingya one of the most persecuted minorities in the world.

The stories that have come out in recent weeks and days are devastating and horrific.

The waves of brutally violent campaigns against the civilians—marked by mass killings, sexual violence, and forced displacement—have resulted in one of the fastest-growing refugee crises of our time.

Women, who account for the majority of those inside the refugee camps, face widespread rape and other forms of sexual violence, and some are even being sold as sex slaves.

Just like our zero-tolerance policy towards persecution within our borders, we must be crystal clear that the United States will not tolerate the persecution of innocent men, women, and children around the world.

I strongly believe that, with the help of the international community, we will find a peaceful solution to this crisis, despite various obstacles in our way.

This resolution is one step forward in that direction.

HONORING SERGEANT MAJOR
ROBERT HAWKINS

HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sergeant Major Robert Hawkins of the United States Army for his extraordinary dedication to duty and service to our Nation. Sergeant Major Hawkins will soon transition from his current assignment as an Army Congressional Legislative Liaison Officer in the House of Representatives to serve in The Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology.

A native of Alexandria, Virginia, Sergeant Major Hawkins began his military career as an Airborne Infantryman in 1990. He subsequently served in assignments to Fort Kobbe, Republic of Panama; Fort Myers, Florida; Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Fort Polk, Louisiana; Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and thrice at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Sergeant Major Hawkins has served in multiple leadership and staff positions throughout his career. His combat deployments include one tour in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and three tours in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 2014, Sergeant Major Hawkins was selected as a Fellow in the Army Congressional Fellowship Program. He subsequently served twelve months as a Defense Legislative Fellow in my office, representing the First Congressional District of Minnesota. While working on my team, I came to know Sergeant Major Hawkins as a shining example of the Army Values set forth in the Noncommissioned Officer Creed. Competence is indeed Sergeant Major Hawkins' watchword, and his commitment to doing what good NCOs do, accomplishing the mission taking care of his teammates, was second to none.

For next two years, Sergeant Major Hawkins served as a Congressional Legislative Liaison Officer in the United States Army House Liaison Division. As the primary liaison between Members of the House of Representatives, their Staffs, Committees, and the Army, he has provided insight and understanding of Army policies, actions, operations, and requirements. His first-hand knowledge of the military, its culture, and traditions has been of tremendous value to Congressional offices. Sergeant Major Hawkins was especially effective in his service to Members and staff as he escorted them on fact-finding and oversight delegations within and outside the United States. Members and staff found him to be a thoughtful, intelligent, and dedicated Soldier in the best traditions of America's Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a pleasure to know and serve with Sergeant Major Hawkins during his time as an Army Congressional Fellow and Congressional Legislative Liaison Officer in the House of Representatives. On behalf of a grateful Nation, it is my honor to recognize the selfless service and sacrifice of Sergeant Major Robert Hawkins and his family. I wish Sergeant Major Hawkins the very best as he begins a new chapter of dedicated service to our nation in the United States Army.

NORTHWEST INDIANA ISLAMIC
CENTER 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I congratulate the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center, as its members and leaders join together to celebrate the center's 25th anniversary. In honor of this special occasion, the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center will be hosting an anniversary dinner on December 10, 2017, at the Avalon Manor in Merrillville, Indiana.

In the early 1990's, a small group of the Muslim population in Northwest Indiana decided to purchase property in the area with a vision to provide a spiritual home for its members, offering religious education and a place for prayer, worship, and community services. The original structure, completed in 1992, was quickly outgrown as the membership grew. In 1999, a new prayer hall and community center were completed. Today, the center is home to over one hundred families, and Friday prayer services are attended by more than three hundred individuals. The Northwest Indiana Islamic Center provides numerous activities and services, accommodating Muslim and non-Muslim individuals and families throughout

Northwest Indiana. These include consultation services, Qur'an reading and memorization services, ceremonial and religious services, interfaith dialogues, humanitarian relief services, and numerous youth programs, to name a few. In addition, there are two Islamic weekend schools and two Islamic full-time schools on its premises.

Northwest Indiana is not only grateful, but proud to have the support of the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center for the past twenty-five years. I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to recognize the exceptional leadership of this noteworthy organization. The Board of Trustees includes Arshad Malak, Hakam Safadi, Hytham Rifai, Nabil Shabeeb, and Wahbi Adad. The Board of Directors is comprised of President Abdul Fatah Adisa, Vice President Omar Estwani, Treasurer Isam Abdo, and Secretary Ferrass Safadi, as well as former Presidents Fadel Shaaban and Shahabul Arfeen, and Osama Salameh, Ashraf Tebry, and Rami Musleh. For their significant contributions to their community, the members and leaders of the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center are worthy of the highest praise.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating the Northwest Indiana Islamic Center on its 25th anniversary. For their remarkable dedication to service and for touching the lives of countless individuals, the organization's leaders and members are worthy of the blessings that have been bestowed upon them.

HONORING HARRY O. BLACKWELL

HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Trenton's beloved Harry O. Blackwell, affectionately known as "Chubby."

I was saddened to hear of his untimely passing; he was a tireless advocate for youth programming for decades in our capital city.

When we examine the life and passion of Chubby Blackwell, his compassion for the youth cannot be ignored. He dedicated his life to mentoring and teaching young people skills that could transform their future. Countless Trenton youth have memories of participating in sports leagues, golf lessons, and summer camps because of Chubby Blackwell.

Chubby's advocacy for children was effective because he made it his business to know the whole family. For many, Chubby Blackwell was that consistent and strong life force that kept them on the straight and narrow. Chubby had a zero tolerance for foolishness; his love was not always friendly—sometimes tough—but always consistent.

Today as we celebrate Chubby we celebrate a life of service to others whose impact will be felt for generations because his commitment was purposeful and motivated by love.

God Bless Chubby Blackwell and thank you to his beautiful family for having shared him with countless young people and indeed this entire community.

I urge my colleagues to join me in remembering the life of Chubby Blackwell and send-

ing our sincere condolences to his friends, family, and to the families he has helped over the years. May Chubby be blessed and rest in peace.

RECOGNIZING MAYOR PRO-TEM
YVONNE JOHNSON

HON. MARK WALKER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mayor Pro-Tem Yvonne Johnson, from Guilford County. I am honored to acknowledge Mrs. Johnson as she receives The Order of the Long Leaf Pine. Awarded for exemplary service to the community and the State of North Carolina that is considered above and beyond the call of duty, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine is among the most prestigious awards conferred by the Governor. Mrs. Johnson has continually worked to make a positive impact in North Carolina. The citizens of Greensboro, Guilford County, and the entire state of North Carolina are truly fortunate to have Mrs. Johnson, an outstanding representative of our community and country. I join with her family, friends, and the Sixth District in thanking Mayor Pro-Tem Yvonne Johnson for her dedicated service to the city of Greensboro and the United States of America.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for the votes on the Motion to Go To Conference on H.R. 1 (Roll Call No. 653) and the Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 1 (Roll Call No. 654). Had I been present, I would have voted nay on Roll Call No. 653 and I would have voted yea on Roll Call No. 654.

REMEMBERING NEIL ETSON

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to remember Neil Etson of Olney, Illinois, who passed away on December 2, 2017, at the age of 93 surrounded by his family at the homestead he built fifty years ago.

Neil dedicated his life to service to others, serving his country, his church, and his community.

In May the Rotary Club of Richland County presented Neil with the Quilt of Valor for his service during World War II, where he served honorably as a Staff Sergeant with the 766th Military Police Battalion.

However, anyone who met him knows that Neil's first and foremost priority was his family, especially Frances, his wife of 66 years, their three children, ten grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

The Olney community has lost a dedicated entrepreneur and community leader. Yet while we mourn his loss, we should remember that Neil Etson's legacy lives on in his family and in the three children's books that he authored based on a lifetime of stories shared with his family.

CONDEMNING ETHNIC CLEANSING
OF ROHINGYA AND CALLING FOR
AN END TO ATTACKS IN AND AN
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HUMANITARIAN ACCESS TO
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SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support of House Concurrent Resolution 90 which condemns the attacks against civilians by Burma's (also known as Myanmar) security services and calls on Burma's Commander-in-Chief, Min Aung Hlaing, to end such attacks in the state of Rakhine.

I share the sentiments of this Resolution that expresses appreciation for the government of Bangladesh for providing refuge to those fleeing violence.

As the Resolution does, I, too, condemn the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army attacks, but also warn that these attacks do not justify the response that has resulted in severe human rights violations and atrocities against civilians.

Rightfully so, the Resolution calls on Burma's government and military and security forces to: (1) implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, and (2) allow humanitarian access to refugees and internally displaced persons.

Further, the bill urges support and access for the United Nations Fact Finding Mission to Burma, and I strongly support that effort.

The Resolution calls on Burma's military and government to allow refugees to return to Burma and to change laws and policies that have contributed to insecurity in the state of Rakhine.

And last but not least, the Resolution calls on the President to impose sanctions on those responsible for human rights abuses, including members of Burma's military and security services.

Over the past month, 436 thousand Rohingya have fled from their homes in Myanmar's western Rakhine State to neighboring Bangladesh.

This is the second exodus of Rohingya, members of a Muslim ethnic minority, in the past year.

The current exodus, like the previous one in October 2016 that led 87 thousand to flee, is being driven by a brutal government crackdown following attacks by armed Rohingya.

Despite calls from international rights groups for stronger action to stop the violence, there appears to be little appetite within the wider international community for more robust intervention.

Permitting the current crisis to unfold, however, eats away at its credibility and threatens peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

On August 25, militants attacked 30 police posts and an army base in northern Rakhine